Prime Minister's visit to Ranthambore Tiger Reserve

550. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR : Will the Minister ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister visited Ranthambore Tiger Reserve to have stock of the latest position of the tiger population and to review the crisis facing the tiger in that and other reserves, on 23rd May, 2005;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(c) the steps taken and being taken to protect and promote the tiger population in the light thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Prime Minister had a first hand knowledge of problems and challenges confronting our National Parks and Sanctuaries.

(c) A Task Force has been constituted to review the management of Tiger Reserves in the country. The Terms of Reference of the Task Force are given in the Statement. [Refer to the Statement appended to the Answer to Unstarred Question 549]. While the report of the said Task Force is awaited, the steps taken by Government of India to conserve tigers are at Statement.

Statement

Steps taken for conservation of Tigers

(i) Legal protection has been provided to wild animals including tigers against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

(ii) Financial and technical help is being extended to the States under Centrally Sponsored Schemes for enhancing the capacity and infrastructure to provide effective protection to wild animals.

(iii) The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.

(iv) The Ministry of Home Affairs has addressed all State Governments to lend a helping hand to the field formations to curb poaching and illegal trade in wildlife.

(v) A National Wildlife Action Plan (2002-2016) has been launched with several action points and priority projects for conservation and protection of wildlife in the country.

Rehabilitation of displaced families

551. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Karnataka has sought Centre's approval for release of 21 hectares of forest land in Somwarpet Taluk, District Kodagu, for rehabilitation of 21 families displaced by the Harangi Project; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard, with the likely date by when the clearance would be accorded?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Yes, Sir, the said proposal has been received.

(b) The proposal was processed and examined in the State Advisory Group Meeting under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. However, final descision in the case could not be taken for want of complete information from the State Government.

Upgradation in forests areas

552. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have given a blanket clearance for upgradation of temporary forest roads;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government had issued fresh guidelines regarding upgradation in protected areas; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?